IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-3 (Cancelled).

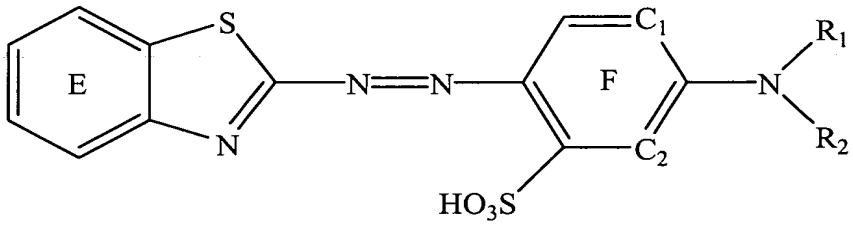
Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The optical recording medium as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 8, which comprises a plurality of said chelate dyes.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The optical recording medium as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 8, wherein said chelate dye accounts for 5 mol% or more of the total amount of the dyes contained in the recording layer.

Claim 6 (Original): The optical recording medium as claimed in claim 5, wherein said chelate dye accounts for 5 to 9 mol% of the total amount of the dyes contained in the recording layer.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The optical recording medium as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 8, wherein the ~~residual moiety except said chelate dye of all the dyes contained in the recording layer comprises chelate dyes having, as the ligands, azo compounds of the same structure alone selected from the azo compounds represented by the general formula (I) or the general formula (II)~~ chelate dye is obtained by mixing a chelate dye obtained by reacting one of said two or more azo compounds with said divalent or more metal ion, with another chelate dye obtained by reacting a different one of said two or more azo compounds with said divalent or more metal ion, in a solvent, thereby forming a solution, and then allowing the solution to stand at room temperature for six hours or more, thereby performing exchange of ligands.

Claim 8 (New): An optical recording medium comprising a substrate and a laser-writable and/or readable recording layer provided thereon, wherein said recording layer contains a chelate dye comprising two or more azo compounds having different structures and a divalent or more metal ion, wherein said azo compounds are selected from compounds represented by the following formula (I):



(I)

wherein ring E may have substituent(s), C_1 and C_2 each represents a carbon atom, and R_1 and R_2 each independently represent a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group, an aryl group, an alkenyl group, a cyclic alkenyl group or a cyclic alkyl group, or R_1 and R_2 may be bonded to each other to form a ring, and wherein the following conditions (1), (2) or (3) may apply:

(1) R_1 and C_1 are bonded to each other to form a saturated ring condensed with ring F,

(2) R_2 and C_2 are bonded to each other to form a saturated ring condensed with ring F,

(3) both R_1 and R_2, with both C_1 and C_2, respectively, form a saturated ring condensed with ring F,

with the proviso that in at least one of said two or more azo compounds, (1), (2), or (3) applies.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claims 1-3 have been cancelled, and replaced with new Claim 8. Claim 8 is supported by Claim 3, combined with the specification beginning at page 9, line 21 through page 17, line 1; page 23, line 11 through page 24, line 15; and the Examples. Note that while the C_1 and C_2 nomenclature does not appear *per se*, it is used to indicate where on the F ring conditions (1), (2) and (3) apply, and is supported by the structures at page 17, line 1.

Claims 4 and 5 have each been amended to depend on Claim 8. Claim 7 has been amended to depend on Claim 8, and by also reciting that the chelate dye is obtained by, in effect, method 1, as described in the specification at page 44, lines 1-11, combined with page 46, lines 5-8.

No new matter has been added by the above amendment. Claims 4-8 are now pending in the application.